

ECT training overview for Module 5

2-hour session (Week 1)

How to use this overview

There are pre-session tasks for the facilitator (essential). You will need to refer to the Module 5 Summary Guide which provides the foundation to this ECT training session. The Learning Intentions refer directly to the *learn that* and *learn how to* statements from the ECF. This session sets out what must be covered by the facilitators in the 2-hour session. All references to how this might be delivered are optional.

Preparation for the facilitator

You should read the Module 5 Summary Module Guide and this session outline carefully before designing training to meet the learning intentions of this session.

Preparation for the ECTs

No preparation required.

Learning Intentions for this session

This session is sequenced at the start of Module 5 and will be focused on effective professional development.

You will learn that:

- 8.1** Effective professional development is likely to be sustained over time and involve expert support or coaching and opportunities for collaboration.
- 8.2** Reflective practice, supported by feedback from and observation of experienced colleagues, professional debate, and learning from educational research, is also likely to support improvement.
- 8.7** Engaging in high-quality professional development can help teachers

improve.

You will learn how to:

Develop as a professional, by:

- 8a.** Engaging in professional development focused on developing an area of practice with clear intentions for impact on pupil outcomes, sustained over time with built-in opportunities for practice.
- 8c.** Seeking challenge, feedback and critique from mentors and other colleagues in an open and trusting working environment.
- 8e.** Reflecting on progress made, recognising strengths and weaknesses and identifying next steps for further improvement.

Introduction

This module addresses the concept of teaching as a profession and the responsibilities of teachers as professionals. ECTs will explore strategies for managing their workload and wellbeing; they will then look in some detail at the role of research in effective teaching and will consider two guidance reports from the Education Endowment Foundation that address best practice in working with teaching assistants and in engaging parents. ECTs will explore strategies for working effectively with colleagues, including specialist colleagues within their school. Throughout the module, ECTs will be encouraged to apply their learning to their own practice and context and to act with agency in developing themselves as professionals.

This module is 7 weeks long. Within the sequence of this programme, the module is designed to be run in the second half of the summer term of Year 1 of the programme.

Research Summary for this session

Being professional (no specific ECF statements, but required for framing the session)

‘Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils’.

(Teachers’ Standards)

A teacher must:

- fulfil wider professional responsibilities
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues

If your ECTs include those from early-years settings, you might also consider the following from the Early Years Teachers’ Standards:

‘Early Years Teachers make the education and care of babies and children their first concern. They are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in their professional practice and conduct...They forge positive professional relationships and work with parents and/or carers in the best interests of babies and children’.

There are many definitions of what makes a ‘profession’, but broadly they all recognise characteristics which are captured in the following description of teachers’ professional commitment in UK schools:

‘The essence of such professionalism can be seen as the exercise of skills, knowledge and judgement for the public good’. (Pollard, 2010)

In the handbook for this programme, ECTs may have read about the principles that underpin the programme and the goal of developing themselves as teachers who are able to make judicious use of a repertoire of practice, within complex school contexts. 'Complexity' in this sense relates to the fact that there are multiple factors interacting simultaneously so that it is not possible to accurately predict the outcomes of any single action – hence the need for judgement rather than the standard application of learned protocols.

The characteristics of effective CPD (8.1, 8.7, 8a)

[Effective Professional Development](#) DfE (July 2016)

Effective teacher professional development is a partnership between:

- headteachers and other members of the leadership team
- teachers
- providers of professional development expertise, training or consultancy

In order for this partnership to be successful:

1. professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes
2. professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise
3. professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge
4. professional development programmes should be sustained over time

And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:

5. professional development must be prioritised by school leadership

Reflective practice (8.2, 8c, 8e)

Teaching is complex professional practice. Teachers cannot simply 'learn teaching' and then reproduce what they have learned in classrooms or other learning environments. Effective teachers continually make decisions about how to plan and proceed with teaching; some of these decisions are planned (e.g. when designing a lesson or sequence of lessons) and some are unplanned – for example, when responding 'in the moment' to formative feedback in front of their class. The quality of this decision-making can be improved through engaging in **reflective practice**. Overall, being reflective about one's practice allows us to see the progress

we are making, what our strengths and weaknesses are, and what steps we need to take next.

To help ECTs to improve skills in being reflective about their practice, they should:

- learn from their own teaching: reflect hard on what they are doing in the classroom, the impact that it is having, and what they might keep doing or change
- think about their teaching in the light of what others suggest is effective, e.g. what research suggests or what is advised by official policy
- deepen their understanding of what works for the ECT by engaging in a more systematic enquiry into their own practice (as you will do in Year 2)
- make use of input from mentors and other colleagues, and ideas gained from engaging in professional debate

The role of evidence in professional practice (8.2)

The role of evidence in professional practice will be picked up in Week 3 of the module (8.2, 8b, 8c, 8d), so the content in this training session is groundwork, rather than the only time the content will be encountered.

Research evidence can be a powerful complement to teachers' professional judgement. However, teachers need to combine their understanding of research evidence with their understanding of their own context as well as their professional judgement. Research evidence should stimulate thought and challenge pre-conceptions – it should not 'tell teachers what to do'.

Why does educational research matter? Some of the ways that research evidence can be helpful include prioritising activity where you can have the biggest impact; getting the most from limited resources; and avoiding fads and fakes.

The training will need to cover

Effective professional development. Timings are suggestions only.

Review 15 mins

This is an opportunity to introduce the module and context for the training session. Develop an introductory activity which enables you to collate and/or discuss prior learning related to the ECTs' understanding of professional development. You might choose to use the following extract from the Teachers' Standards to support this activity:

'Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils'.

Plan 35 minutes

You need to design activities in this section that address the ECF statements articulated above, in the Learning Intentions section.

You might ask ECTs to think for a minute or two about what they think it means to be 'a professional' as a teacher, or to be 'professional' in how they act as a teacher (within their phase and specialism). You could create a short discussion activity where ECTs can share their views and draw out highlights from their current thinking. They could return to this at the end of the session for reflection.

You could draw from the research and practice statements above to consider, for example, Pollard's professionalism quote and the links to the handbook.

Theory to Practice 60 mins (e.g. 3 x 20 mins)

(a) **Design an activity that examines the characteristics of effective CPD.**

You could use the following extract from the DfE as set out below (and within the research summary):

Effective Professional Development

DfE (July 2016)

Effective teacher professional development is a partnership between:

- head teachers and other members of the leadership team
- teachers
- providers of professional development expertise, training or consultancy

In order for this partnership to be successful:

1. professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes
2. professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise
3. professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. professional development programmes should be sustained over time

And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:

5. professional development must be prioritised by school leadership

You might use examples to illustrate the points above. Particularly explore the notion of the 'educational bottom line' encapsulated in Point 1 and link this to a theory of change. Highlight that the link between PD and pupil outcomes isn't always direct (e.g. going on a course about assessment) but there should be a line connecting PD to pupil impact. For example, a course on understanding trauma in young people might be particularly relevant to a teacher working in alternative provision, because a deeper understanding is likely to help them engage more effectively with pupils who have a higher likelihood of having experienced trauma, and better engagement should support more effective teaching and learning over time.

You should draw attention to opportunities for the following as good sources of PD:

- strengthening pedagogical and subject knowledge by participating in wider networks (e.g. subject/phase-specific, CCT, ResearchEd, TeachMeets)
- seeking challenge, feedback and critique from mentors and other colleagues

in an open and trusting working environment (e.g. open door policy, engaging with formal and informal mentoring)

You might ask ECTs to work in pairs/threes to briefly describe examples of CPD they have experienced this year at school and assess them against the criteria. Consider the extent to which their own experiences of CPD have met criteria from the DfE.

Take feedback and shape discussion around how/the extent to which ECTs can influence the quality of CPD they engage in, by:

- looking for opportunities that meet the DfE criteria
- planning opportunities to sustain PD activities in their own practice
- collaborating with colleagues

Pick up and explore common challenges encountered with sub-optimal CPD and help ECTs to consider ways to avoid these.

(b) Design an activity that deepens understanding of reflective practice

You could ask ECTs to share the range of models, definitions and approaches to reflective practice that they have encountered during ITE and their first year in teaching. Include in this anything they recognise as reflection from sessions on this programme.

From this discussion, highlight key comments re: reflection. For example:

- there are lots of definitions, lots of models – there's no one best or agreed-upon approach, so it is useful to really clarify what we mean when we use the term
- reflection includes an element of standing back from your practice, interrogating this, and making sense of what has happened
- How we go about this sense-making varies according to the sources on which we draw

Draw attention to the importance of **critical reflection** here. 'Critical' here means that we are engaged in making informed, professional judgements in complex conditions of practice. This implies that teachers 'review thoughtfully and systematically what they have done in the past with a view to sustaining or improving their practice in the future' (Winch et al. 2015). You might add criteria for reflective

practice in teaching that it is 'thoughtful and systematic' and oriented, like teacher PD, towards improving practice.

Acknowledging that there are many models of reflective practice, you might share Kolb's reflective cycle and briefly talk through some of its key features – a situation on which to reflect, some sense-making (including some reaching of deeper understanding and recognition of strengths and weaknesses), some next steps/actions, and/or Brookfield's Theory of Reflection (4 lenses).

You could curate a discussion about where ECTs have found elements/activities in this programme particularly impactful for their learning. Explore what makes aspects of their learning particularly powerful and how ECTs can continue to drive their PD to maximise opportunities like these.

You could highlight the role of feedback from observation of experienced colleagues and/or professional debate (8.2). Explore how frequently and in what form the ECTs might reflect. Recognise that reflective practice can happen with different degrees of formality and to different timescales:

In action: while teaching, teachers are constantly reflecting on what's happening in order to decide what to do next (responsive teaching requires reflection)

Following specific incidents: could be informally (over cup of tea at break time, on commute at end of day) or more formally (e.g. in mentor meeting or incident review)

As a disciplined weekly practice (e.g. reviewing the week in a learning log)

As part of staff performance management, appraisal or similar

Note that the rest of this session will look at research/evidence in further detail.

(c) Design an activity that looks at why research/evidence matters: the role of evidence in professional practice

Consider how ECTs currently use research evidence in their own practice. How have they seen it being used in their own schools?

Share with ECTs:

Research evidence is powerful when it is used to complement, not replace professional judgement.

Some of the ways that research evidence can be helpful include prioritising activity where you can have the biggest impact, getting the most from limited resources, and avoiding fads and fakes.

To highlight that our judgement alone can often lead us astray, share some concise summaries of different research projects and ask teachers which ones they would be most interested in to try in their classrooms. You could pick randomised controlled trials funded by the Education Endowment Foundation, which are freely available on their website. Examples of these trials reporting negative findings include 'Achievement for All' and 'Chatterbooks'. Examples of these trials reporting positive findings include 'Dialogic Teaching' and 'Embedding Formative Assessment'.

This can work well if you give ECTs a few minutes to discuss their thoughts, and then:

- tell ECTs that some of these projects were evaluated with positive findings and some with negative findings
- ask them to vote on which they think were evaluated positively and which negatively

Typically most teachers do no better, and routinely worse than chance, in evaluating the likelihood of an intervention having a positive impact on pupils. This can be a powerful example of how some of our instincts – and some of the Poor Proxies for Learning that ECTs have already encountered – can be misleading.

Where can ECTs find good sources of research evidence? What are their strengths and limitations?

Encourage ECTs to explore a small number of these resources. Three good starting points would be the EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit, the EEF's Guidance Reports and the Impact Journal from the Chartered College of Teaching. The primary aim of this activity would be to familiarise ECTs with the format and how they can be used. You may wish to provide additional structure, such as selecting an example of each or providing some questions for ECTs to consider.

Note that ECTs will engage with 2 Guidance Reports (relating to parental engagement and teaching assistants) later in this module, so it may be best to avoid them.

There are many excellent sources of research evidence: two very good starting points for engaging with research are the Education Endowment Foundation's Teaching and Learning Toolkits (Early Years/Main Toolkit) and Guidance Reports. The Toolkits provide a high-level overview of key topics in education, while the Guidance Reports go into more detail. The rigour with which these documents are produced, combined with their accessibility, makes them an excellent starting point for finding research. Other sources, like the articles in the Chartered College's Impact Journal, provide more contextualisation, although it may be appropriate to apply greater caution to the claims made.

Next Steps 10 mins

Encourage the ECTs to capture their learning from the session. This could be done as a series of *I have learned that...* and *I have learned how to...* statements. You could return to the key points raised in the first activity of the session and ask ECTs to reflect on the extent to which their thinking has evolved and been reinforced through this session.

- Pick up any key points arising
- Resolve any remaining questions

Connect to what is to come in Module 5. Refer to topics on the Module Summary Guide to briefly flag the topics that will be explored in coming weeks.